



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, August 22, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks gave top play to a fire that broke out in an apartment in Akita Prefecture early this morning, killing three residents. TV Asahi led with a report on the sinking of two boats early this morning in waters off Nagasaki after they sent distress signals. One crew member was found in a state of cardiac arrest and two crew members are missing.

SECURITY

Japan's defense budget request for fiscal 2018 to hit record high of 5.25 trillion yen

NHK reported this morning that the Ministry of Defense has decided to make a record defense budget request of about 5.25 trillion yen for fiscal 2018, which includes the cost for boosting the missile defense system to respond to North Korea's ballistic missile attacks. The network said the MOD is planning to allocate funds for introducing the "Aegis Ashore" missile defense system without disclosing the actual amount of the budget outlay. In addition, the network said the MOD is planning to request funds to acquire a new type of missile interceptor called "SM-3 Block IIA" for Aegis ships, and to develop an advanced radar capable of detecting and tracking ballistic missiles in light of North Korea's repeated missile launches on a "lofted" trajectory. The ministry is also reportedly planning to allocate funding for the construction of two escort ships and a submarine and the procurement of six F35A fighter jets and four Ospreys in order to beef up its capability to defend remote islands and waters around Japan in view of China's growing maritime activities.

- [Defense Ministry to make record 5.25 trillion yen FY18 budget request](#) (Asahi)

- [Editorial: Shore up SDF mobility in southwest islands under basic defense review](#) (The Japan News)

POLITICS

- [Yomiuri survey: 50% of DP Diet members support Maehara in presidential race](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Policies of two candidates for DP president](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Leadership race a mere first step for Democratic Party's revival](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Motegi's appointment as economic revitalization minister won on the links](#) (FACTA)
- [Japan's financial watchdog to scrap Inspection Bureau in restructuring](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Nemoto to serve as "director general" of LDP constitutional revision headquarters](#) (Asahi)
- [Strength of in-house groups in House of Representatives](#) (Mainichi)
- [Education ministry plans major organizational shake-up](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Prime minister's schedule on Aug. 21, 2017](#) (Nikkei)

INTERNATIONAL

- [Gov't to step up support for foreign technical interns in nursing care industry](#) (Yomiuri)
- [The failure of Abe's Trump-dependent diplomacy](#) (The Japan Times)
- [New tie-up to tackle cancer drug research / Asian cooperation aims at speeding up approval](#) (The Japan News)
- [Envoy denies claim Ukraine leaked engine tech for N. Korea's ICBM](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

- [Gov't to subsidize smaller firms' push for work-style reform](#) (Yomiuri)
- [METI to develop senior SME resources through international exchanges](#) (Nikkei)

- [Japan trading firms reinforce exports of railway-related equipment](#) (Mainichi)
- [TEPCO begins extending ice wall to reduce tainted water in Fukushima](#) (Kyodo News)

SCIENCE

Taiji to conclude sister city agreement with Denmark's Faeroe Islands

NHK reported on its website that the mayor of Taiji, Wakayama, left for the Faeroe Islands of Denmark on Monday to conclude a sister city agreement. Taiji and the Faeroe Islands both conduct drive hunting of whales and dolphins. The network said Mayor Sangen will visit the town of Klaskvik to inspect local fishing practices and hold talks to conclude a sister city agreement in an effort to jointly share their whaling culture with the rest of the world. Mayor Sangen reportedly told the network: "It is difficult for Taiji town alone to obtain global understanding of whaling and dolphin hunting. I hope to work closely with the Faeroe Islands to protect fishing that is closely connected to the lives of the people." The network said the mayor is expected to remain in the islands until August 25.

- [iPS technology leads to clinical trial on rare disease patients](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Temporary police box opens in whaling town ahead of hunting season](#) (Kyodo News)

SOCIETY

- [Politicians shy away from social media for fear of anonymous backlash](#) (Nikkei Evening edition)
- [Syrian refugees to study at graduate schools in Japan from autumn](#) (Jiji Press)
- [40 pct of depopulated municipalities deemed sustainable: report](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Child supporters worry as suicides tend to rise after summer break](#) (Kyodo News)
- [More measures taken for LGBT staff / Companies working to extend benefits, bring an end to discrimination](#) (The Japan News)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate rises to 43.8% after cabinet reshuffle, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
- [Cabinet support rate remains high among men and low among women, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)

- [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)
- [Incumbent pitted against former IT firm exec in Ibaraki gubernatorial election](#) (Mainichi)
- [Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll on Global Warming](#) (Jiji Press Public Opinion Poll Bulletin)

OKINAWA LOCAL PRESS

Mattis orders expedited consultations with Japan on schedule for returning Futenma

Okinawa Times gave top play to a report claiming that it has learned from several USG sources that Secretary of Defense Mattis has instructed Pentagon officials to expedite consultations with Japan on the existing schedule for the return of the Futenma Air Station in “fiscal 2022 or later” that has been agreed upon by the U.S. and Japanese governments. According to the paper, the secretary wants to specify “fiscal 2025 or later” as a feasible timeframe. The paper conjectured that the secretary gave the instruction based on the view that Japan is responsible for the delay in the FRF construction and that it is necessary to draw up a timetable that reflects the current state of Futenma relocation. The paper wrote that the U.S. side takes the position that it is necessary to specify a feasible timetable for the return of Futenma because the return will affect the planned reversion of six U.S. military facilities and areas south of Kadena. The paper wrote that it was informed by an unnamed senior DOD official that the plan to return the Futenma base in 2022 or later is unrealistic.
